

TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION UPDATE

March 2002

BACKGROUND

As an outgrowth of looking at barriers to student learning, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) decided to do a more thorough review of the transfer and articulation policies and practices in Washington State.

Concurrent with this review, the Board recognized that numerous transfer and articulation agreements have been and are being developed at the local level by various entities within the higher education community.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has also been studying the transfer system in this state.

While supporting these efforts, the Board recognized the need to understand these activities and agreements within the overall context of statewide transfer policy and law.

ACTIVITIES TO DATE

- The HECB met with the SBCTC to discuss transfer and articulation issues.
- In October 2001, the Board conducted a roundtable discussion on branch campus issues with a central theme of articulation between two-year schools and the branch campuses.
- A Transfer and Articulation Policy and Practices Action Group was established and included representatives of the public universities and colleges, independent institutions, SBCTC staff, and the Council of Presidents. The group met in November 2001 and developed a list of issues for consideration.
- At the December Board meeting, HECB staff presented a detailed overview of the state transfer system as well as the Action Group recommendations.
- At the March Board meeting, the SBCTC staff will present their view of the key issues and some proposed strategies.
- The next steps will be to discuss the HECB perspective on the key issues and proposed strategies for transfer and articulation as well as coordinating the SBCTC and HECB efforts.

STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGES

STUDY SESSION AGENDA ITEM February 28, 2002

Subject (Information/Discussion)

Baccalaureate Degree Access: Policy Discussion Follow-up

Background

At the January Board meeting, staff discussed policy issues and presented data about the transfer system in Washington state. The staff presentation was followed by discussion between the Board and a panel of college and university representatives on concerns about the current transfer system and ways of addressing those concerns. This agenda item is intended to follow-up on the issues identified and includes staff recommendations.

The following is a summary of the strengths of the current system:

Community and technical colleges play an important role in producing baccalaureate degree graduates in Washington state.

- More than one-third of bachelor's degrees awarded each year go to students who started at community or technical colleges.
- Most two-year college students transfer to public four-year institutions in Washington.
- University branch campuses and off-campus programs are expanding access to baccalaureate degrees.
- Community and technical colleges open the door to baccalaureate degrees for thousands who might not otherwise go to a university.

Transfer works well for most of the 12,500 students who transfer every year.

- The "direct transfer agreement" which allows students who complete associate of arts degrees at two-year colleges to transfer as juniors to universities has been in place for 30 years. It meets general education requirements and provides solid preparation for many university majors.
- A new associate of science transfer degree promises to improve transfer for students seeking bachelor's degrees in sciences, computer science and engineering.
- Hundreds of individual agreements provide well-defined paths from two-year programs to bachelor's degree programs.
- Universities are increasingly offering convenient, effective programs on community and technical college campuses for place bound adults.

Key issues

As a result of the discussion, staff have identified three key issues to address:

How can we ensure that transfer students have access to upper division majors when the demand for baccalaureate degrees is increasing so rapidly?

- Will the increased number of freshmen enrolling at public baccalaureate institutions reduce access for two-year college transfers?
- How can access to competitive majors be improved for well-prepared transfer students?
- What are some ways of maximizing 2 + 2 relationships between university branch campuses and community and technical colleges to continue building capacity and provide smooth transitions for students?
- What is the role of co-located university centers?

How can two-year and four-year institutions work together to meet students' needs for lower division preparation for baccalaureate majors?

How can we expand opportunities for individuals with technical degrees to complete bachelor's degrees?

Proposed Strategies

Based on discussion at the Board meeting and with college and university representatives, the following strategies are proposed:

1. Work with public universities to identify key majors for building additional statewide transfer degrees. Continue work in process to identify common prerequisites for teacher education majors.
2. Work with public and independent universities to expand applied baccalaureate degrees in key locations around the state and to develop additional high demand degree programs.
3. Expand and strengthen the infrastructure for university centers located on community and technical college campuses.
4. Work with public universities to develop a co-enrollment model that can be used by colleges and universities around the state.
5. Develop a common course numbering system for common core courses.

6. Use existing opportunities to develop strategies with universities, such the joint meeting between WACTC and the University of Washington in March, and the joint meeting between university provosts and the Instruction Commission Executive Committee in April. Convene a task force on transfer issues to advise system efforts.

Outcome

The Board will provide direction to staff on the recommendations made to improve baccalaureate access for community and technical college transfer students.

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